

Message Text

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ORIGIN OPIC-06

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 INT-05 AID-05 /030 R

DRAFTED BY OPIC/F BMHENDERSON

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OPIC/ID:GRCOOPER

OPIC/GC:MWISS

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R 242249Z JUL 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN

SUBJECT: OPIC PROJECT INITIATIVE

REF: STATE 161670

1. TWO STRONG COMPANIES OPIC HAS CONTACTED ARE READY TO MOVE ON CHROME MINE (MINERALOGIST AND TOP EXECUTIVES READY TO VISIT SIERRA LEONE TO EVALUATE ORE DEPOSIT AND DISCUSS PROJECT WITH GOVERNMENT), PROVIDING THEY CAN BE ASSURED OF TWO THINGS: (A) THAT MINING CONCESSION IS AVAILABLE, AND (B) THAT GOSL WILL ENTERTAIN PROPOSALS IMMEDIATELY. ALSO LIKE EMBASSY VIEW ON OWNERSHIP TERMS UNDER WHICH GOSL WILL PERMIT FOREIGN COMPANIES TO ESTABLISH CHROME MINING COMPANIES. OPIC ALSO READY TO PUBLICIZE DETAILS OF PROJECT THROUGH METALS INDUSTRY SOURCES ONCE THESE TWO POINTS CLEARED.

2. REQUEST EMBASSY ASAP DISCUSS CONCESSION WITH MINING OR OTHER RELEVANT OFFICIALS AND REPLY ON ABOVE POINTS TO OPIC.

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3. IN INVESTIGATION OPIC HAS DETERMINED THAT: THE ONLY

KNOWN HOLDER OF A CHROMIUM CONCESSION IN SIERRA LEONE,
SIERRA LEONE CHROME MINES, LTD., A SUBSIDIARY OF LONDON-
BASED NAYLOR-BENZON AND CO.,LTD., NO LONGER HOLDS SUCH A

CONCESSION, ACCORDING TO RECENT STATEMENTS OF NAYLOR-
BENZON OFFICIALS IN LONDON TO OPIC OFFICIAL. THE KNOWN
ORE BODY EXTENDS IN POCKETS OVER A REGION SEVENTY MILES IN
LENGTH, GENERALLY IN A STRAIGHT LINE FROM PUNJEHUN TO
KENEMA. THE KNOWN ORE IS LOW GRADE, AVERAGING FORTY-TWO
TO FORTY-FOUR PERCENT CHROMIC OXIDE, HOWEVER, THE CHROME-
IRON RATIO IS FAVORABLE, THREE TO ONE TO TWO TO ONE. THE
SILICA CONTENT IS HIGH, SIX PERCENT, HOWEVER, THIS MAY BE
REDUCED BY PROCESSING. DECONTROL FOLLOWING 7/23/76. KISSINGER

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